

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting
March 7-9, 2007
Fish and Game Headquarters
Boise, ID**

March 7, 2007

Public Meeting

Chairman Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He introduced Commissioners Tony McDermott, Alex Irby, Bob Barowsky, Wayne Wright, Randy Budge and Gary Power. Staff introductions were made and the hearing was opened up for public comment.

Chairman Wheeler introduced Representative Dick Harwood. Representative Harwood has been a State Legislator for the past seven years. Representative Harwood was asked by some of his constituents to comment on the Muzzleloaders In Line Rules. He stated some of the constituents concerns were that the survey was not fair; the number of elk decreased in Units 4 & 7 and side lock hammers on muzzleloaders. He invited the Commissioners to attend a meeting March 30th in St. Maries to meet with constituents to discuss the muzzleloader issues.

Beverly Martin, St. Maries, referenced an article in the *Wild Idaho News* that wild elk hunting brings \$300 million to Idaho. Ms. Martin and her husband are owners of Pines Motel. Their revenue from the hunting season helps their business through the months of December – March. Ms. Martin would like to know why the decisions on muzzleloader were made.

Nate Helm, representing Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife Idaho, thanked the Commission, IDFG Director and his staff. Mr. Helm thanked the Commission for their support of Mule Deer and for the support of \$2 million for habitat. Mr. Helm's group has two items of concern; one concern attitude of satisfaction with the status quo and the second concern is the doe harvest theory. Another issue that the group is working with Academia, IDFG, BLM, Forest Service, State Department of Lands, and Parks and Recreation to develop maps by hunt units to provide hunters that talk about roads and road access.

Katie Fite, Western Watershed Project, referenced the January 25, 2007 Commission meeting regarding the procedure for selling wolf tags.

Travis Clark, Fruitland, stated that there is a real problem with population in mule deer in Unit 23. He did not see any bucks over 24 inches. The mule deer population seems to

have declined to him. Mr. Clark thanked the Commission for reinstating the elk tag season for Unit 23.

Grant Simonds, of Idaho Outfitters & Guides Association, stated his support of the proposed rule on controlled hunt allocation. The new language would allow the Commission the option of allocating one tag in hunts with 18 or less tags. Hunts with 19 tags or more could be allocated no more than three percent. It should be noted that any allocation of controlled hunt tags must occur in areas where there is historic outfitter use. Areas with no outfitters are not eligible. He pointed out that allocation only applies to deer and elk, not trophy species. The new language is in keeping with the notion expressed by the Commission several years ago that they preferred greater flexibility with controlled hunt allocation options. He pointed out that allocated tags are in addition, not subtracted from the corresponding controlled hunt. Any outfitted client allocation is conducted through the normal lottery process and those putting in for allocated hunts must have an agreement with an outfitter in advance of putting in. Mr. Simonds also requested that the Commission provide a message for the Commission minutes that state that the intent of this proposed rule is that the option of one tag applies to hunts with 18 tags or less and that the option of no more than 3% would apply to eligible hunts of 19 tags or more. Institutional memory is his reason for requesting a statement of intent.

Jim Justice stated that the Department is doing an excellent job managing the Cecil Andrus Wildlife Management Area. He referenced the new muzzleloader regulations and would like the Commission to reconsider the sidelock rule.

Marv Hagedorn asked the Commission to consider when setting the big game rules to look at buck to doe, bull to cow, doe to calf ratios. He has concerns why the number of controlled hunts continue to increase in the last five years and what the biological reasons are for these hunts.

Ron Shoen requested information on where he could look for the technical data and information that the Commission used for the decision on muzzleloaders.

Charles Starks stated that problems in game management and fisheries is due to the fact the Commission is not a working Commission. He shared his thoughts on the muzzleloader decisions made by the Commission.

Bob Bash believes that IDFG has an unfair practice that has been used the last 3-4 years to those persons in a hunt unit that have unclaimed tags after the initial drawing, if the person who wins the tag does not claim the tag, hunters must reapply. Mr. Bash would like the Commission to look into changing this practice; maybe coming up with an alternate list at the same time as the initial drawing or just drawing again from the list of unsuccessful applicants who initially applied.

Allen Critchfield spoke regarding handicapped hunters and providing some back-country hunt area access for them to hunt.

Bill Killen thanked the Commission for reinstating a hunt that was lost last year to muzzleloaders that he has always hunted. Mr. Killen thanked Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner Irby for not being afraid to address the hard issues. Mr. Killen also thanked the Commission for keeping the white tail and mule deer issues separate and moving on the wolf control.

Chuck Hoovestol, of Boise, testified that he believes the ATV new motorized rule that will not allow riders to ride in before daylight and ride out after dark is unfair. Mr. Hoovestol hunts in Unit 66. He has always accessed the area by trail bike. Mr. Hoovestol believes that he must choose between a quality hunt and a quality camp. Penalties should be stiffer for hunting from an ATV. He does not believe that hunter conflicts are in the remote areas. Mr. Hoovestol would like the Commission to take a closer look at the rule and what is the goal of the rule. Due to this rule, Mr. Hoovestol stated that he may not buy an elk tag this next year.

Kevin O'Hara, of Boise, spoke regarding muzzleloader and the use of certain powders and projectile will turn an inline muzzleloader into a 300-yard weapon. He does not feel that separating inline from traditional hunts will make a difference.

Jamie Gould, Idaho Muzzleloader Association, stated that he is in support of the new restrictions on muzzleloader rifles. Mr. Gould covered the history of the weapons traditional/inline. In order to keep hunt opportunities and the harvest rates quota where they need to be we need to stick with the traditional weapon. That is way these hunts were established in back the 1940s when the sportsmen went to IDFG to practice their heritage.

Bill Matravers would like the Commission to review the regulations and review the data. He does not feel that the inlines are doing the damage that has been said.

Mike Schindel commented that he came to speak after seeing an article in the Idaho Statesman regarding the restrictions on muzzleloaders. Mr. Schindel supports the Commissions decision.

Mike Murray, thanked the Commission for the new rules on the muzzleloaders.

Ed Rankin thanked the Commission. He stated that his testimony will revolve around muzzleloader. He really does believe that the Commission and IDFG have the best interest of the sportsmen at heart. Mr. Rankin would like the Commission to revisit the recently created muzzleloader rules. He would like the pivoting hammer requirement – please removed or reconsidered.

Mike Green stated that he supports the muzzleloader rules. Mr. Green would like to see a greater number of animals to hunt. To do this the Commission needs to reduce doe and cow hunts. Mr. Green stated that IDFG needs to deal with all predators. Mr. Green would like to see increased fines for serious poaching.

Jared Mattravers commented on the muzzleloader rule changes.

Bill Squires stated that he would like to see the pivoting hammer rule deleted.

Don Phillips reported that he thanked the Commission for their decision on the muzzleloader rules. Mr. Phillips would like to see a proposed traditional muzzleloader hunt added to Unit 31. Mr. Phillips would like to see the bear issue in units 31, 22, 32A, 32 addressed, it has been a controlled hunt for many years, Mr. Phillips would like to see a general season.

Tanna Phillips stated that she supports the ruling on traditional muzzleloader season. She is a traditional muzzleloader hunter in units 31 and 32A. Ms. Phillips would like to see an open season for Unit 32A and would like to propose an antlerless season. In regards to ATV access, Ms. Phillips would like to see the Department issue their own handicap stickers.

Pete Ellsworth spoke on behalf of Concerned Sportsmen of Idaho and Back Country Houndsmen. Mr. Ellsworth stated that the groups oppose the proposals that would restrict bear and cougar harvest; also any increase in muzzleloader harvest opportunity.

Ilene Berg representing her self, and is an archery hunter. She is concerned about the ATV restrictions. She feels that the higher let-off does not make one more accurate. Ms. Berg stated that she would like the Commission to consider an archery only turkey season.

Todd Jones spoke that he supports the proposed muzzleloader restrictions. However, Mr. Jones stated that he does not believe that the restrictions go far enough. Mr. Jones has been a traditional muzzleloader hunter for thirty years.

Gilbert Hardy stated that he has heard a lot of people state that you can load pellets into a traditional muzzleloader. Mr. Hardy stated that he has built guns and shot in many competitions for the past thirty-seven years and that doing this does not work. The pellets generate too much pressure and it is not a safe condition. Mr. Hardy supports the Commission's decision. Mr. Hardy stated that a solution to the inlines vs. traditional argument may be to have an inline hunt in Units 1 & 2 as they are more prevalent in those areas of the state and leave the traditional hunt alone down here.

Steve Alderman stated that the whole issue of traditional vs. inline argument is a hoax, as far as there is no difference, except for the looks. Unless you go back to traditional guns from the 1800s. Mr. Alderman stated that 90% of hunters hunt with inline muzzleloaders; there is no need to separate the hunters. Mr. Alderman stated that IDFG said that there was too much of a mule deer harvest. Mr. Alderman asked the Commission to not take hunters' opportunity away.

Layne Wright stated that he was concerned how the hunters were notified of the rule changes for muzzleloaders. Mr. Wright suggested to the Commission to send a survey to all hunters who purchased muzzleloader tags to get their input.

March 8, 2007

Opening Comments

Chairman Wheeler called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. Commissioners McDermott, Irby, Barowsky, Wright, Budge and Power were present.

Agenda Changes

Director Groen noted that a discussion of notification / communication process for major rule changes will be added to the agenda after the big game discussion.

Review of Public Comment

Commissioners addressed comments relating to the muzzleloader changes. Chairman Wheeler noted that after hearing the comments on the muzzleloader proposal, it seems to be a 50/50 support or opposition. Commissioners McDermott and Irby will accept the invitation presented by Rep. Harwood to attend the March 30th meeting in St. Maries to discuss the muzzleloader proposal with constituents in the area. Other comments discussed were the ATV rule change, mule deer survey, Bob Bash comments regarding the unfairness of unclaimed tags and handicapped tags. Department staff will follow up on these comments.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Topics in the Director's report to the Commission included the January 20, 2007 Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation meeting attended by him and Commissioner Wright, and meetings with other state directors. Director Groen reported that he has had many requests to meet with various groups and organizations in the past few months. He referenced Bureau reports included in the Commission agenda book. Director Groen reported that he is looking forward to this year; and to get everyone on the same page for mule deer management.

MISCELLANEOUS

Commissioner Reports

Clearwater Region: Commissioner Irby reported that the steelhead fishing is great and the river is crowded; Department staff is working on weed control at Redbird Canyon property; the fertilization program is going to be completed at Dworshak this year. The turkey season is coming up and there are turkeys everywhere. He reported on how the

community of Weippe is working together to improve Deyo Pond. Craig Mountain is one of the premier hunting areas for elk and deer. He distributed a picture of an elk that was harvested in the region.

Panhandle Region: Commissioner McDermott reported turkeys are a problem in the region and they are destroying many trees in one of the local nurseries. Commissioner McDermott read a letter from Gene Andrews to Senator Keough regarding the damage to their nursery.

He stated that the snow conditions are about normal, so they are expecting a good survival of big game this winter. Commissioner McDermott reported on Farragut Range and an update on Lake Pend Oreille fishery.

Salmon Region: Commissioner Power reported on a poaching case in the Salmon Region last year and how DNA helped prove the case; a wolf poisoning; cooperative efforts to reconnecting streams to the Lemhi River; and the Living Streams programs in the schools.

Southwest Region: Commissioner Barowsky reported on volunteer efforts to plant seedlings in the Cherry fire areas; hunter education classes; Department efforts with Nampa and Caldwell city parks to put together a kids fish camp to be held in the summer. Commissioner Barowsky reported on the Department Environmental Biologist and the work he has completed for some of the developers in the local area.

Magic Valley Region: Commissioner Wright reported that mild, dry weather continues to dictate and influence fish and wildlife activities. The lack of snow and warm temperatures has benefited mule deer survival, but the lack of snow has hampered elk survey in the Wood River Valley area. Department staff has been asked to provide information to Blaine County Planning and Zoning on a large 1,000 + unit subdivision proposed on lands identified as habitat for wintering elk, mule and sage grouse.

Southeast Region: Commissioner Budge reported the region is experiencing mild winter conditions; projection reports from Bureau of Reclamation indicate that the reservoirs are expected to fill. Mild winter conditions seem to be favorable for big game in the region. He referenced open houses held in the region to discuss the 4-point or better plan in Units 70 and 73, and doe hunting proposal for a limited hunt for youth. Commissioner Budge referenced Oneida Dam and what the role and policy is of the Commission in dealing with development of dams.

Upper Snake Region: Commissioner Wheeler reported the region has sold all of the bobcat tags; Paul Faulkner, Land Owner Appreciation, will be working at NRC office in Idaho Falls; and that the cost for the elk Tex Creek aerial survey was \$23,000.

CONSENT CALENDAR

07-46 Commissioner Irby moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion TO ADOPT THE OCTOBER 4, 2006 MINUTES 6. A AND THE FINANCIAL

REPORT 6. B AS REPORTED IN THE CONSENT CALENDAR. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Budget Modification 6. c

The \$128,880 budget enhancement is a cooperative project between the Idaho Department of Transportation, Department of Fish and Game, and Federal Highways Administration. The project will use ITD funds to develop a statewide wildlife linkage map and implementation of a wildlife mortality data collection system on Idaho highways and roads. The map will help define wildlife crossing and migration areas in relation to roads using data and expert opinion of IDFG, ITD and other field staff. In addition, the project will develop a data input system to allow field staff to record wildlife mortality data on highways and roads and provide this information to highway and IDFG staff. Both these products will help increase public safety on Idaho's highways and roads as well as increase the potential to conserve wildlife in relation to highways and roads.

Past efforts have mapped linkage areas in some of the state. This effort will complete a statewide coverage useful to road and highway planners and provide a consistent data source for project planning, monitoring, and mitigation.

07-47 Commissioner Barowsky moved and Commissioner Budge seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE BUDGET MODIFICATION AGENDA ITEM 6 C. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

07-48 Commissioner Budge moved and Commissioner Irby seconded a motion TO ACCEPT AGENDA ITEM 6. D AS RECOMMENDED TO APPROVE LARRY BULL TO THE SOUTHEAST WINTER FEEDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

LEGISLATION

Legislative Update

Sharon Kiefer, Legislative Liaison updated the Commission on Legislative activity since the January Commission meeting. Ms. Kiefer provided a handout (Appendix 40, Exhibit 33) showing legislative bill activity for this session. She noted that Senate Bill 1128a amends the existing law relating to fish and game to provide that it shall be a misdemeanor to use devices accessed and controlled via the internet to shoot or kill any birds or animals; and to provide for penalties.

07-49 Commissioner Power moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO SUPPORT SENATE BILL 1128A BAN INTERNET HUNTING. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

RULES

Big Game: Outfitters and Guides Controlled Hunt Tag Allocation

Brad Compton, Big Game State Manager presented the Department Recommendations for Outfitters and Guides Controlled Hunt Tag Allocation. (Appendix 40, Exhibit 34).

Mr. Compton stated that the adoption of the Elk Management Plan in 1998 established tag caps to limit the number of hunters participating in general season elk zones. The outfitting industry supported the management plan, but recognized the potential economic impact of limited tags. In the late 1990s an Allocation Team, comprised of Department staff and outfitting industry representatives, was established to provide recommendations on allocation of tags for outfitted clients. Two central themes the Allocation Team promoted were: 1) changes in hunting opportunity should be proportionate among resident hunters, nonoutfitted nonresident hunters, and outfitted hunters; and 2) any outfitted client allocation should be conducted through a lottery process.

In January 2006 the Commission adopted changes to deer and elk tag allocation rules, in part to provide for greater flexibility and discretion in establishing allocations for controlled hunts. In February 2007 the House & Senate Rules subcommittees rejected a portion of the new Commission rules. Specifically, the subcommittees rejected IDAPA 13.01.04.505.02 [e](i) – “The number of allocated tags available within the controlled hunt area will be no more than six percent (6%); or.”

Idaho Code 36-408 (4) provides discretionary authority for the Commission to allocate tags/permits for outfitted clients where the Commission limits the total number of tags/permits available. IDAPA 13.01.04.505 provides Commission rules for allocating tags/permits to outfitted clients.

The Commission is responsible for establishing the total number of outfitted client allocated tags/permits. The Idaho Outfitter’s & Guides Licensing Board is responsible for distribution of allocated tags/permits among outfitter areas.

Regional Department staff, Idaho Outfitters & Guides Licensing Board, Idaho Outfitters & Guides Association, and members of the House and Senate Rules subcommittees were consulted during development of the new proposed rule.

Staff Recommendation:

IDAPA 13.01.04.505.02

- e. The number of allocated tag/permits will be determined by using one (1) of the following options:
 - i. The number of allocated tags available within the controlled hunt area will be no less than one (1) tag and no more than three percent (3%);
or

- ii. The number of tags available within the controlled hunt area will be based on the average historic use during the previous five (5) year period and calculated tag numbers will be rounded up when permits equal or exceed zero point six (0.6) and rounded down when permits are less than zero point six (0.6); or
- iii. No tags will be allocated.

Commission action is required to address House and Senate Rules subcommittee rejection of previous rule.

Commission discussion followed regarding allocation. The Idaho Fish and Game Commission acknowledges the concerns of resident, non-resident, and outfitted hunters relative to the implementation of outfitter allocated deer and elk tags as established by statute in 36-408(4) and administrative rule IDAPA 13.01.04.505. Additionally, the Commission is committed to fair treatment of outfitted and nonoutfitted hunters; an original intent of allocation. Adoption of IDAPA 13.01.04.505.02(e)(i) provides for equitable treatment of outfitted and nonoutfitted hunters regardless of controlled hunt permit levels, and provides the necessary Commission flexibility to accommodate full implementation of state policy.

Strict adherence to mathematically-derived and proportionally-based determinations of outfitter allocation can lead to unfair treatment of outfitted or nonoutfitted hunters. Therefore, the Commission maintains discretionary authority to ensure outfitter allocation is implemented in a fair and equitable manner for all hunters.

07-50 Commissioner Wright moved and Commissioner Irby seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AS PRESENTED FOR OUTFITTERS AND GUIDES CONTROLLED HUNT TAG ALLOCATION. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

REPORT

Mandatory Harvest Report

Brad Compton introduced Bruce Ackernan who provided a report to the Commission on the Mandatory Harvest Report (Appendix 40, Exhibit 35). Mr. Ackerman stated that the report is used to estimate harvest and provides detailed information regarding number of hunters, by units, sex of harvest, antler size, deer species, etc.

RULES

Big Game: Deer, Elk, Pronghorn, Bear, Mountain Lion

Brad Compton presented 2007 big game season recommendations for deer, elk, and pronghorn, and Land Owner Appreciation tags (Appendix 40, Exhibit 36).

Steve Nadeau presented 2007 big game season recommendations for black bear and mountain lion.

At the request of Commissioners Tony McDermott and Alex Irby, they would like to consult with their Regional Big Game Biologist before making a decision on short range weapons hunt changes for their regions. Chairman Wheeler stated that the Commission would address the big game rules motions after agenda item # 12 New License System Update.

REPORT

Communication on Major Rule Changes

Director Groen stated that the Department held public meetings in all seven regions with 400 people attending; and 3,800 people responded to the Department website survey on proposed muzzleloader rule changes. The Department still heard comments from individuals stating that they never heard about the proposed rule changes. He stated that the Department would like to look at other options on how the Department can better communicate major rule changes to the public.

Mike Keckler, Chief, Bureau of Communications, briefed the Commission on options the Department could use to better notify the public of major rule changes. Mr. Keckler noted that staff is working on making the Department website more user friendly and a rules alert on the front page of the website. Plans are being developed to post Fish and Game bulletins at the vendors who sell licenses around the state to inform our constituents of news.

Follow Up to JFAC Presentation

Director Groen and Jim Lau, Chief, Bureau of Administration, provided a report to the Commission on the Department's FY 2008 JFAC presentation February 5th. Mr. Lau referenced Senator Schroeder's comments regarding the need to form an Ad Hoc Committee to look at alternative funding for the Department. A handout titled *Investing in Wildlife* was distributed to Commissioners (Appendix, Exhibit 37).

New License System Update

Jim Lau, Chief, Bureau of Administration introduced Eric Richey, General Manager, and Don Purdue from Outdoor Central. Mr. Richey and Mr. Purdue provided an update on the progress of Outdoor Central in implementing the new license system in Idaho. He noted June 1st is the projected date for the system to go live.

RULES

Big Game: Deer, Elk, Pronghorn, Bear, Mountain Lion

07-51 Commissioner Budge moved and Commissioner Irby seconded a MOTION TO ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN, BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION FOR THE SOUTHEAST REGION WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT THE OUTFITTER ALLOCATION STAYS THE SAME AT 12 IN UNIT 66A HUNT #2159. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

07-52 Commissioner Wright moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion TO ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN, BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION FOR THE MAGIC VALLEY REGION. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

07-53 Commissioner Barowsky moved and Commissioner Irby seconded a motion TO THE ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN, BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION FOR THE SOUTHWEST REGION. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

07-54 Commissioner Power moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion TO ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN, BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION FOR THE SALMON REGION. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Commissioner McDermott noted that he has consulted with the Panhandle Regional Supervisor and big game managers.

07-55 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Irby seconded a motion TO ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN, BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION FOR THE PANHANDLE REGION WITH THE EXCEPTION REGARDING MUZZLELOADER ONLY HUNTS IN UNITS 4-7-9 FOR BOTH DEER AND ELK, CONVERTING MUZZLELOADER-ONLY HUNTS TO SHORT RANGE WEAPON HUNTS. The motion carried with Commissioners McDermott, Irby, Wheeler, Power, Barowsky, voting yes and Commissioners Budge and Wright voting no.

07-56 Commissioner Irby moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a MOTION TO THE ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN, BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION FOR THE CLEARWATER REGION WITH THE

EXCEPTION REGARDING MUZZLELOADER ONLY HUNTS IN UNITS 10-A AND UNIT 16 CONVERTING TO SHORT RANGE WEAPONS HUNTS. The motion carried Commissioners McDermott, Irby, Wheeler, Power, Barowsky, voting yes and Commissioners Budge and Wright voting no.

07-57 Commissioner Wheeler moved and Commissioner Wright seconded a motion TO ADOPT, BY PROCLAMATION, THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN, BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION FOR THE UPPER SNAKE REGION. The motion carried in a unanimous vote

Commission discussion followed on the decision the Commission made at its January meeting regarding muzzleloaders. The Commission will revisit the muzzleloader issues. The decision to allow short-range weapon hunts in Regions 1 and 2 are only a band-aid temporary solution to get through the 2007 hunting season.

Commissioner McDermott would like the record to reflect that his decision to do what he has done with the Panhandle Region regulations to allow short-range weapon hunts has nothing to do with the petitions, letters or phone calls he received. He listened and self educated himself on the muzzleloader issues and is personally convinced that the Commission made the wrong decision in January because they were given the wrong information.

Commissioner McDermott feels the Commission made the decision in January for the right reasons and he since found out that his decision was based on information that was incorrect; and his perception about the inline at that time was that it was significantly different. And since then he realizes that it is not different.

07-58 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Irby seconded a motion TO HOLD A COMMISSION 1 DAY WORKSHOP TO LOOK AT THE MUZZLELOADER TECHNOLOGY AND FIGURE OUT IF THE COMMISSION MADE THE RIGHT OR WRONG DECISION IN JANUARY 2007. IF THE COMMISSION MADE THE WRONG DECISION, THE COMMISSION WILL MAKE IT RIGHT. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

REPORT

Wolf Update

Steve Nadeau, Large Carnivore Manager provided an update to the Commission on Idaho Wolf Management (Appendix 40, Exhibit 38). Mr. Nadeau stated that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a delisting rule for wolves on February 7, 2007. The Department has been planning what wolf management as a big game animal will look like and how we will proceed in hunting wolves. Legislation has been drafted to allow for selling of wolf tags once wolves are delisted. A public survey regarding wolf management has been drafted.

Mr. Nadeau noted that the final wolf population estimate for 2006 is 664 wolves, 183 pups and 71 confirmed packs in Idaho. There are approximately 100 monitored radio collared wolves, and 57 packs monitored.

He noted that in anticipation of delisting, Idaho Department of Fish and Game is preparing a species plan for wolves. The plan will be written within objectives set by State Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation Update

Chairman Wheeler introduced, Gayle Valentine, Executive Director, updated the Commission on the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation (IFWF). Items of interest:

- Online Trip Auction starts March 11th, this is the 17th year for the auction
- Building lease agreements for Salmon, Idaho Falls, Clearwater and Jerome have been approved by Attorney General, Dallas Burkhalter, and Jim Lau, Chief of Administration
- Contract review process for the option to purchase Redbird property between the Foundation and Commission has started.
- Agreements:
 - Maynard Gulch has been approved
 - Spirit Lake is still in the process
- Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation January Board meeting request to meet with the full Commission once a year
- April IFWF Board meeting is in Lewiston with a trip to Redbird property; and election of new officers
- Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS) is requesting more information on Redbird property, staff has prepared a narrative information packet with photos to send to FNAWS

MISCELLANEOUS

07-59 Commissioner Irby moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION, PURSUANT TO IDAHO CODE 67-2345(1)(C) PERTAINING TO LAND ACQUISITIONS. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

The executive session ended at 6:46 p.m. and no official action was taken.

March 9, 2007

Chairman Wheeler called the meeting to order at 8:25 a.m. All Commissioners were present.

REPORT

Yellowstone Cutthroat Plan

Scott Grunder, Fishery Program Coordinator, provided a summary copy of the Department responses to comments received on the Management Plan for Conservation for Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout in Idaho (Appendix 40, Exhibit 39).

Mr. Grunder reported that the Management Plan for the Conservation of Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout in Idaho describes how the Department intends to manage and conserve this important game fish as per its mission found in Idaho Code Section 36-103. The Department's strategic plan has a goal to "Improve public understanding of and involvement in fish and wildlife management." This plan sets management direction and goals for conservation of Yellowstone cutthroat trout. The Commission sets policy and provides direction, considers input from the public, and has the authority to adopt, amend, or reject Department-recommended plans. The Fisheries Bureau solicited public and agency comments on the management plan. Having done that and incorporating comments as appropriate, the Fisheries Bureau is seeking Commission adoption of the Yellowstone cutthroat trout management plan.

07-60 Commissioner Power moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO APPROVE THE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR CONSERVATION OF YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Fish Management Plan

Scott Grunder, Fishery Program Coordinator, provided a summary copy of the Department responses to comments received on the Fisheries Management Plan 2007-2012 (Appendix 40, Exhibit 40).

Mr. Grunder reported that the 2007-2012 Fisheries Management Plan describes how the Department intends to manage public fisheries for the next six years as per its mission found in Idaho Code Section 36-103. The Department's strategic plan has a goal to "Improve public understanding of and involvement in fish and wildlife management." This plan considers public desires and biological needs and sets management direction and goals. The Commission sets policy and provides direction, considers input from the public, and has the authority to adopt, amend, or reject Department-recommended plans. The Fisheries Bureau seeks Commission approval of the Fisheries Management Plan.

07-61 Commissioner Irby moved and Commissioner Wright seconded a motion THAT THE COMMISSION APPROVE THE 2007-2012 FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

LANDS

Land Acquisitions

Gregg Servheen, Wildlife Program Coordinator briefed the Commission on the four properties that the Department plans to purchase. Mr. Servheen noted that these land acquisitions are in accordance with Commission land acquisition policy.

07-62 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO PROCEED WITH THE FEE-TITLE ACQUISITION OF THE LOWER ST. JOE, PEND OREILLE WMA LOT, PEND OREILLE WMA GINTER, AND GEORGETOWN MCCAMMON PROPERTIES. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

MISCELLANEOUS

07-63 Commissioner Irby moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION, PURSUANT TO IDAHO CODE 67-2345(1)(f). The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

The executive session ended at 9:00 a.m. and no official action was taken.

Cameron Wheeler
Chairman

Cal Groen
Secretary